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# Gingerbread cottages for a cause

ROLF BOONE; The Olympian

OLYMPIA - The Capitol never looked so delicious. It had a gummy bear facade, candy cane columns and highlighted a gingerbread cottage competition Saturday at downtown's Olympia Ballroom.

The event continues from noon to 5 p.m. today and it's the second gingerbread competition to raise money for South Puget Sound Habitat for Humanity, the nonprofit home-building organization.

Funds raised from the two-day event and a silent auction will go toward construction of the group's Fairview Cottages project in northeast Olympia, said Curt Andino, executive director of the South Puget Sound Habitat for Humanity.

Excluding the massive gingerbread Capitol, 29 gingerbread cottages competed for a first, second and third place award on Saturday. A people's choice award will be announced today, said Peg Amandes, a Habitat for Humanity volunteer and one of the organizers of the competition. She also made three gingerbread cottages for the event, Amandes said.

Each gingerbread cottage had to adhere to a few rules, including size. Everything visible on the cottages had to be edible, she said. Winning the first-, second- and third-place awards on Saturday were:

1. "Gnome Sweet Gnome," a three-story cottage whose design appeared to have been inspired by Dr. Seuss.
2. "Lunch break: Christmas night shift," a cottage whose roof tiles were made from sliced almonds.
3. "Santa's little helper's cottage," a cottage that appeared to have frosted shredded-wheat shingles.

Voting Saturday for today's people's choice awards were Olivia Salazar Debreau of Olympia and her 4-year-old son Alejandro Breau. Olivia said she liked "Gnome Sweet Gnome" because of its three-story design and the fact that the gnomes looked so lifelike. Alejandro's choice was "Monster House," a gingerbread cottage whose pretzel-stick columns looked like sharp teeth.

Executive Director Andino said last year's competition raised about \$2,000, and this year's event is expected to raise enough for a roof at the Fairview Cottages.

The gingerbread cottages will be sold Thursday in a silent auction at the Capitol Campus. Funds were also raised from entry fees and \$1 voting tickets.